

RECKLESS RALPH'S

# DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 20, No. 2

February 1952

Whole No. 233



Six months after starting their New York Boys' Weekly in March 1877 (to cut into the booming success of Norman L. Munro's original Boys of New York), Tousey & Small came out with a second big newspaper-like sensation-fiction weekly, Young Men of America, the premier number of which appeared September 13, 1877. Old Merciless the Man Hunter was the star serial in the first number, and The Hunchback, or A Terrible Secret, by A. F. Hill, a mighty knight of the popular pen in those days, inspired the artist responsible for the big woodcut on the front page of the fifth issue, shown here in miniature. The early numbers of Young Men of America were never surpassed in later issues for the spirit and color of the stories, and the top-notch character of the draftsmanship in the illustrations. Tousey woodcuts in the 1880's were anemic alongside this gaslit-gazettey smash. The lucky possessor of the first volume of this fiction-sheet has a choice item,



## 19th CENTURY PEEP-SHOW

By Fred T. Singleton

V

Frank Tousey began his publishing activities in the early 1870's. He had barely turned twenty-one, but he had good advice and took it. He started in a decade with a dark-brown post-war taste in its mouth. From the first he had a flair for the sensational and dramatic, even lurid. Nevertheless, periodical dealers handling his publications got our nickels and dimes in the 1883-1890 period. The reaction against the sensational in the 1880's cramped Tousey's style a bit, but brilliantly colored feathers concealed the hook in his print. We struck with a rush. Some of the scenes and characters in his novels and story papers still haunt our mind. Twenty years ago we got a sudden itch to know what became of the Tousey fiction-factory, and went directly to the then big chief of the American News Company. We never got to him, but his secretary came out to tell us to get in touch with a Dr. Sinclair Tousey at the Garden City (Long Island) Hotel. We gathered that Dr. Tousey was the heir to the original Sinclair Tousey's interest in the American News Company. In any case he appeared to be a wealthy man. Contacting him by phone, we were invited to lunch with him the next day at his hotel (Long Island in the summer, Florida in the winter). He knew the family history and told us some strange and fatal things about some of the Touseys, their wives, and their mothers-in-law. But he had no illusions about or sentiment for Frank Tousey's once alluring (for us) publications. Some years later, curious about the relation of Dr. Tousey to Frank and Frank's younger brother Sinclair (still another member of the family named after the founder of the family fortunes), we had a Washington genealogist dig up information. Before presenting the chart and notes supplied by this expert to our good friend Raymond Caldwell, we set down here for the record the following facts: Sinclair Tousey, founder of the American News Company, was born in New Haven (Connecticut) July 18, 1815, this date being from the Dictionary of American Biography, and from a short but highly informative biography edited by the reliable Orville Victor for Beadle's Saturday Journal in 1880. This first Sinclair Tousey died June 16, 1887. Dr. Sinclair Tousey was a grandson of this 1815 Tousey, his father being John Euart Tousey, born in 1842, who of course was a son of the first Tousey. The first Tousey had a brother George who married Elizabeth Corks. Six children were born to them, the third being Frank, born May 24, 1853, and the sixth being Sinclair, born January 26, 1862, both of course being nephews of the original Sinclair Tousey. Frank died September 7 1902, and Sinclair died July 28, 1915.

We are still reading new publications about some of the 19th century

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writers of popular novels, the latest being another London-published (Jarrols) book, a biography of Ouida (Marie Louise de La Ramee), that extraordinarily gifted author "who could not make up her mind whether to live in the world of reality or the world of dreams," but who wrote some forty-five novels remarkable for stirring narrative and excellent plots. Eileen Bigland is the author of this new Ouida opus, and it bears the title of Ouida the Passionate Victorian. Collectors and readers of old pamphlet novels and libraries make the acquaintance of this creator of lush romances of life in high places" in George Munro's Seaside Library, that remarkable cheap disseminator of popular literature in the 1870's and 1880's at ten cents for single numbers and twenty cents for double numbers. Only the Yankees benefited from this cheap reprinting, the original British editions in two or more volumes being too expensive for complete distribution. Held in *Bondage* (1863) was the first of the "voluptuous day-dreams" of this "flamboyant romancer." Under *Two Flags* brought phenomenal success in 1867. This writer's favorite Ouida story is *In Maremma* (1882), one of her finest writings, which he read in the Seaside Library reprint years ago. In this romance Ouida created poignantly haunting scenes and an unforgettable heroine.

### OLD-TIME BOYS' BOOKS

by J. Edward Leithead

#### Part 4

William T. Adams wrote many a story for boys—and good ones—under the pseudonym Oliver Optic. I liked best his Civil War tales, especially the two series of six volumes each, *The Blue and the Gray—Afloat* (Taken by the Enemy, Within the Enemy's Lines, On the Blockade, Stand by the Union, Fighting for the Right, A Victorious Union) and *The Blue and the Gray—On Land* (Brother Against Brother, In the Saddle, A Lieutenant at Eighteen, On the Staff, At the Front, An Undivided Union. I understand that Edward Stratemeyer penned this last volume, due to the death of Adams. The original edition was issued in a very handsome blue and gray binding by Lee and Shepard, and well illustrated. Both series sold for \$1.50 per volume, pretty high for a boy's book at that time. Then there was Optic's *Army and Navy Stories*, 6 volumes—*The Soldier Boy*, *The Sailor Boy*, *The Young Lieutenant*, *The Yankee Middy*, *Fighting Joe*, *Brave Old Salt*.

For those who didn't care for war stories, Adams wrote plenty of other kinds, such as *All-Over-the-World Library* (three separate series of the same name, 4 volumes to a series), *Woodville Stories*, 6 volumes, *Starry Flag series*, 6 volumes, *Boat Builders Series*, 6 volumes, *Great Western Series*, 6 volumes, *Yacht Club Series*, 6 volumes, *Onward and Upward Series*, 6 volumes, *Lake Shore Series*, 6 volumes.

Another writer of war stories, mostly about the Revolutionary War, was James Otis Kaler. He dropped the surname for his writings. Dana Estes & Co. (afterward taken over by L. C. Page & Co., I believe) published *The Minute Boy Series*, attractive volumes and well illustrated by A. Burnham Shute and J. W. F. Kennedy, two of which, *The Minute Boys of Lexington* and *The Minute Boys of Bunker Hill* were by Edward Stratemeyer, and all the rest, by Otis—*The Minute Boys of the Green Mountains*, *The Minute Boys of the Mohawk Valley*, *The Minute Boys of the Wyoming Valley*, *The Minute Boys of South Carolina*, *The Minute Boys of New York City*, *The Minute Boys of Long Island*, *The Minute Boys of Yorktown*, *The Minute Boys of Philadelphia*. Abounding in historical events and characters, these were splendidly written tales of the Revolutionary War and Indian fighting on the frontier of that period. *The Boys of Fort Schuyler*, *Captain Tom*, *the Privateersman*, *The*



Signal Boys of '75, Under the Liberty Tree and When Israel Putnam Served the King were also from his pen.

The A. L. Burt Co. published a long series of similar tales by Otis, covering the whole War of the Revolution and even earlier—When Washington Served the King, With the Regulators, Amos Dunkel, Oarsman, The Defense of Fort Henry, Morgan, the Jersey Spy, Sarah Dillard's Ride, A Tory Plot, At the Siege of Havana, With the Swamp Fox, With Washington at Monmouth, On the Kentucky Frontier, With Warren at Bunker Hill, A Cruise With Paul Jones, Across the Delaware, A Traitor's Escape, With Lafayette at Yorktown, Corporal Lige's Recruit, The Capture of the Laughing Mary, At the Siege of Detroit, Afloat in Freedom's Cause. At least one Civil War story by Otis was published by Burt—With Grant at Vicksburg—and nearly all these books were illustrated by J. Watson Davis, though A Traitor's Escape (about Benedict Arnold) had illustrations by George G. White. They made a fascinating series, something like Tousey's Liberty Boys of '76, although, unlike Captain Dick Slater and his brave band of Continentals, who lasted throughout the weekly, each of the Otis books, or so I believe, had an entirely different set of characters. At the Siege of Quebec and With Perry on Lake Erie were two other war tales, the publishers of which I do not know.

But the historical story wasn't the only type written by James Otis, although I think he was at his best with them. Probably one of his best-known books, printed many times, by Harpers, I think, was Toby Tyler, or, Ten Weeks With a Circus. Burt issued these titles also, The Castaways, Wrecked on Spider Island, The Search for the Silver City, A Runaway Brig, The Treasure Finders, Jack the Hunchback; and David McKay these titles, Chased Through Norway, Inland Waterways, Unprovoked Mutiny, Wheeling for Fortune, Reuben Green's Adventures at Yale.

While on the subject of Revolutionary War stories, it is well to speak of the very fine series of them written by Dr. Everett T. Tomlinson. The Blue and Buff Series—A Prisoner in Buff, Old Fort Schuyler, In the Wyoming Valley—were among his earliest. Then the War of the Revolution Series, handsome volumes, illustrated by Charles Copeland, published by W. A. Wilde Co.—Three Colonial Boys, Three Young Continentals, Washington's Young Aids, Two Young Patriots. Another volume issued separately by the same publisher, with Copeland's fine illustrations, was In the Camp of Cornwallis. It really seemed to belong to the War of the Revolution Series, and when these books were reprinted by Grosset & Dunlap, they did include it in a uniform volume, making the series five in number. It was later on, about 1903 to 1906, that W. A. Wilde published four Tomlinson books relating to the French and Indian War—With Flintlock and Fife, The Fort in the Forest, A Soldier of the Wilderness, The Young Rangers. These were called The Colonial Series, and later reprinted by Grosset & Dunlap.

(To be continued)

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# NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

Here is some bad news for a start. Patrick Mulhall, Co. Kilkenny, Castle-comer, Ireland, Member No. 36, died Nov. 26th, 1951, at the age of 81 years old. A real old timer was he, and I am given to understand he was writing a fine article for the Round-up, so you can see how active he was, as I understand, he was out for his regular walk when he died. He was a great authority, on the old bloods, and had a very nice collection of them. (Reported by A. W. Lawson.)

Also Roscoe B. Martin, Forrestville, N. Y., Member #55 also passed away. Just when, I don't know, but within the past few months. Another fine member. Don't know how much of a collection he had, but I know he loved the old yellow-backs very much.

We are going to miss these fellows very much, and wherever they are, God bless them, always.

Have you seen the book on "The Great Rascal," by Jay Monaghan, it is out, and is worthy of anyone's collection, price \$4.50. Kind of steep, but there's lots of good stuff in it, for it is the life of Ned Buntline and his exploits. King of the dime novelists, Buffalo Bill's promoter, soldier, sportsman, Western trader, rogue and whatnot. Clippings sent in by Ralph P. Smith, Arvid Dahlstedt, Sam Olmhausen and others.

C. Fred Orphal, Ernest Beigus and others sent in clippings on the death of Col. Zack T. Miller, showman and former rancher died at the age of 74 at his ranch at Waco, Texas. He is the last of 3 brothers, Joe, George and Zack Miller, owners of the 101 Ranch back in the 1920s and '30s. He was an intimate friend of Tom Mix, Will Rogers, and others.

Joseph J. Myler, 333 Pelham St., Rochester 10, N. Y. will trade Old Nick Carters for Beadles and early Tip Tops.

Arvid Dahlstedt, P. O. Box 133, Great Barrington, Mass., has a lot of low numbered old timers to trade for both colored and black & whites.

Fred Lee wrote me some time ago, that it would be a good idea to have an annual necrology list in the last issue of the Round-Up. See list in last issue, but I forgot to mention Fred's name.

Wm. H. Gander has a fine story on the various English magazines titled "The Boy's Herald," in The Boys Herald, March 1952 issue. It will appear in America's Oldest and Smallest Boys Magazine. Sample copy 10c, 24 issues for \$1.00. Write to The Boys Herald, 69 Walnut St., Struthers, Ohio.

Bill Lee, 3909 N. New England Av., Chicago 34, Ill., wants "The Woggle-Bug Book" by L. Frank Baum, 1906 pub. by Reilly & Britton.

Has anyone ever seen this one? The Nickel Library Series One. No. 1, 1877, 5¢ per copy, size 5½x8 inches, 32 pages, black and white picture on front cover, published by the "Pictorial Printing Co.," 74 & 76 Randolph St., Chicago, Ill. Title, "Rainbow." A Romance of Frontier Life, by C. Leon Meredith.

Arvid Dahlstedt says that the first submarine story was published in or around the 5th or 6th Century. The Apocryphal Life of Alexander the Great, "Known as the Pseceda-Callesthenes," because it is supposed to have been written by his friend "Callesthenes," Alex Vessel, the "Two-Horned," is described as a cage of glass which was covered with asses skins and a door that could be closed with chains and rings. It would hold three people and food for 100 days though nothing is said about the air supply. It goes on to tell of adventures with monsters, etc. (This came from an article in the Fantasy Advertiser.)

Have you seen the cute little hard covered books, size 3½x4¼ inches, 32 pages, with an illustration on every other page, and published in 1949 by the Samuel Lowe Co., Kenosha, Wisc., called the "Ten Cowboy Stories," (The "Swap-it" Books). Titles: Little Tex in the Midst of Trouble, Little Tex Escape, Little Tex Comes to XY Ranch, Get Them, Cowboy, The



Mail Must Go Through! A Story of the Pony Express, Nevada Jones, Trouble Shooter, Danny Meets the Cowboys, Flint Adams and the Stage Coach, Bud Shiners and the Oregon Trail, The Outlaws Last Ride. They sell at 10¢ each at the Woolworth's 5 & 10¢ stores.

## SANTA KLAWS JOINS THE BROTHERHOOD

by Ripley

Mabe you brothers think you have grown too old to believe in Santa Claus, that you know all the answers and are so dog gone set in your ways you just refuse to believe. O.K. so laugh if ye wanna, but I with my own baby blue eyes saw the old

geezer, whiskers and all. I'll never forget the time he appeared, also Rudolph, and was his nose red.

I was once a non believer, but sa help me I stuck to me guns and waited one Xmas Eve mostly because Santa had an apology coming from me. You see the year previous I got the old boy sore because instead of hanging up my stocking as I usually do, I hung up my shoes, this wasn't so bad, but my feet were still in them, and said feet were nothing to gladden the eye when seen.

Anyway, down our old chimney he came, but nary a toy, but what he did have was a great big bundle of dime novels. And all for me. There was a complete set of Merriwells, a complete set of seven other libraries

## RECENT RENEWALS TO THE ROUNDUP

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24. Howard J. Fahrner, 789 St. Paul St., Rochester 5, N. Y.
28. Edward & Tilman LeBlanc, 36 Taylor St., Fall River, Mass.
29. Herbert Leitstein, 136-06 76th Rd., Kew Gardens Hills, Flushing, N. Y.
39. J. P. Guinon, Box 214, Little Rock, Ark.
45. Capt. C. G. Mayo, Wild Acres, the Mayo Farm, Huntington, Vt.
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166. F. F. Johnson, 1485 So. Second St., East, Salt Lake City 4, Utah.
172. Thor G. Mauritzen, Room 211, 404 W. 9th St., Los Angeles 15, Calif.
173. Thomas Funderberk, 557 20th St., So., Apt. 267, Arlington, Va.
176. Jesse Harriman, 26 Tatman St., Quinsig Village, Worcester, Mass.
177. William G. Lee, 3909 N. New England Ave., Chicago 34, Ill.
- \*187. Miss Amelia Scott, Grand Arms Apt., 1142 So. Michigan Blvd., Chicago Ill.
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### Change to the following addresses

5. Fred T. Singleton, 3818 N. W. 19th Ave., Miami 42, Fla.
44. Charles F. Heartman, 3646 Camp St., New Orleans 15, La.
161. James W. Martin, 222 C. St., So. San Francisco, Calif.
179. Wallace H. Waldrap, R. #5, Box 289, Greenville, S. C. (Left out of membership list by mistake, sorry I missed you pard, I apologize for leaving it out.)

## TIP TOP WEEKLY — Bought, Sold and Exchanged

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J. P. GUINON, Box 214, Little Rock, Ark.

which I won't mention, it would only get you fellers jealous. I got into confab with him and he told me he was going to join the Happy Hours Brotherhood soon as Xmas was over. Up north he can't build toys all day so at night he does his relaxin with novels.

The reason he gave me all those books was he heard I had been a good boy.

Now that, I just know you WONT believe.

The Examiner, Jan. 19th, 1888, has a little bit of news that may be of interest.

Mr. W. Clark Russell says that the idea of becoming a writer first struck him on a ship off Cape Horn. He was then a sailor and had a little difference with the captain and consequently was living down below on bread and water. There was nothing to do down there, so he managed to get hold of a copy of Lalla Rookh and as he read he thought there was nothing to prevent him from writing poetry. He produced a failure of course but the effort started him in the direction of literature.

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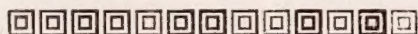
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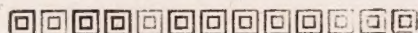
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